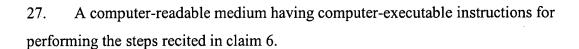
## **CLAIMS**

## What is claimed is:

- 1. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing steps comprising:
- (a) determining, in a computer, whether a predetermined event has occurred; and
- (b) communicating with a computer input device having an illumination member to cause the illumination member to change states in response to the determining step.
- 2. The computer-readable medium of claim 1, wherein said determining step includes determining whether at least one incoming message has been received.
- The computer-readable medium of claim 1, wherein said communicating step includes causing the illumination member to blink.
- The computer-readable medium of claim 1, wherein said communicating step includes causing the illumination member to change intensity.
- The computer-readable medium of claim 1, wherein said communicating step includes causing the illumination member to change colors.
- 6. A method for controlling an illumination member on a computer input device, said method comprising:
- (a) determining, in a computer, whether a predetermined event has occurred; and
- (b) changing a state associated with the illumination member in response to the determination step.
- 7. The method of claim 6, wherein said changing step includes transmitting a signal to the computer input device.
- 8. The method of claim 6, wherein said determining step includes determining whether at least one incoming message has been received.

- 9. The method of claim 8, wherein said determining step includes determining whether at least one e-mail message has been received.
- 10. The method of claim 8, wherein said determining step includes determining the number of incoming messages received and said changing step includes causing the illumination member to change states in a manner corresponding to the number of incoming messages received.
- 11. The method of claim 8, further comprising the step of establishing a set of senders, wherein said determining step includes determining whether the sender of the incoming message is in the set.
- 12. The method of claim 9, wherein said determining step includes determining the number of e-mail messages that has been received and not opened.
- 13. The method of claim 6, wherein said determining step includes determining whether an instant message has been received.
- 14. The method of claim 6, wherein said determining step includes determining whether a request to respond to one of a video conference call and an audio conference call has been received.
- 15. The method of claim 6, wherein said determining step includes determining whether a user is capable of receiving a solicitation.
- 16. The method of claim 6, wherein said determining step includes comparing a scheduled event time relative to an actual time set in the computer.
- 17. The method of claim 16, wherein said determining step includes determining whether the actual time set in the computer is the same as the scheduled event time.

- 18. The method of claim 16, wherein said determining step includes determining whether the actual time set in the computer has reached a time prior to the scheduled event time.
- 19. The method of claim 6, wherein said determining step includes determining whether a correct answer has been input.
- 20. The method of claim 6, wherein said determining step includes determining one of a state, a characteristic, and a condition relating to a character in a game program.
- 21. The method of claim 6, wherein said changing step includes causing the illumination member to blink.
- 22. The method of claim 6, wherein said changing step includes causing the illumination member to change intensity.
- 23. The method of claim 6, wherein said changing step includes causing the illumination member to change colors.
- 24. The method of claim 6, wherein said determining step further includes determining whether the computer input device has moved relative to a supporting surface.
- 25. The method of claim 6, wherein said determining step further includes determining whether a ball on the computer input device has moved.
- 26. The method of claim 6, wherein said determining step includes determining whether a request to respond to a solicitation to join a chat room has been received.



## 28. A system comprising:

a computer input device having a housing adapted to rest on a supporting surface, and an illumination device coupled to said housing; and

a computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing steps comprising:

- (a) determining, in a computer, whether a predetermined event has occurred; and
- (b) communicating with a computer input device having an illumination member to cause the illumination member to change states in response to the determining step; wherein light illuminated from said illumination device is visible when said housing is placed on the supporting surface.
- 29. The system of claim 28, wherein said determining step includes determining whether a correct answer has been input.
- 30. The system of claim 28, wherein said communicating step includes causing the illumination member to blink.
- 31. The system of claim 28, wherein said communicating step includes causing the illumination member to change intensity.
- 32. The system of claim 28, wherein said communicating step includes causing the illumination member to change colors.

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